

Samuel Manyang

Age: 26

Region: Bahr al Ghazal

I left my village, Aweng, when I was nine years old because there was fighting. The militia killed people in the village. They came several times. People ran away to hide in the bush. You ran today and tomorrow you ran again. The militia took the cows by force and my village was burned down. You ran away to save your life and not to care for your property. My dad and mom died, but my two sisters and brother are alive in Sudan.

It took me three months to walk to Ethiopia with my neighbors. There were a lot of wild animals, like lions. There was no water or food along the way. My throat hurt when I swallowed. We would go several days at a time without food or water. People went hungry. People died. I was still a kid. It was very hard for me to walk every day. There were no vehicles that could take people. You didn't have a road to travel. You had to walk in the bush, and there were a lot of stones on the ground.

I was in Panyido, in Ethiopia, from 1987 until 1991. In 1991, we went to Pochalla because Ethiopia was at war. We made it to Lockichokio and stayed from May to July 1992. In August, I arrived in Kakuma. In Kakuma, I studied under the trees for a year and then the UNHRC built a school house for us. I finished primary school in 1997. My cousin came to the U.S. in 1995. He sent money to pay for me to go to high school at Manor House Boarding School, in Kigale, Kenya. I graduated in 2000.

In 1999 and 2000, the UNHRC and INS interviewed refugees in Kakuma to come to the U.S., but I missed them because I was at school. I wrote to the INS and they sent someone to interview me in Kakuma. I gave them all my documents. I waited from 2002 to 2004 for them to tell me I could come to the United States. I finally reached Phoenix on October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

I attended the Arizona Automotive Institute for fourteen months and I graduated with an Associate Degree in July, 2006. I work at GMC, but I still would like to study to get a Bachelor's Degree. I speak Arabic, English, Swahili, and Dinka, and I would like to learn Spanish. In the United States, you go to school, you got to work, and you can do your own things. I like the schooling. A place is good when you are controlling yourself.